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Benevolent PIRATES Event Touts Celebs As Force for Good

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Contrary to the grumblings of social critics who dismiss our culture's fascination with the entertainment industry as trivial and superficial, media companies and celebrities can be a powerful influence for social advocacy and other good works.



PIRATES
PRINT INTERACTIVE RADIO & TELEVISION
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Case in point: On February 9th, the Television Academy hosted an event produced by PIRATES (The Print Interactive Radio and Television Educational Society), a Los Angeles-based professional organization whose mission is to bring nonprofits and the media together for the greater good of our diverse community. The event, titled "How Hollywood and Celebrities Can Be a Force for Good," provided valuable insights on how nonprofit organizations can effectively collaborate with celebrities and other entertainment industry partners. Television Academy Chief Financial & Administrative Officer Frank Kohler welcomed the capacity crowd, which represented a broad spectrum of health and social service agencies, to the Academy Conference Centre.

Moderating the panel was Robert Berger, President of Healthier Solutions, Inc. and a member of the Academy's Los Angeles Area Peer group as well as its TV Cares and ATAS Cares committees. Berger shared a few examples of his company's award-winning celebrity public service announcements, including a California Department of Health Services breast cancer spot that premiered at the Academy in 2003. James Anderson, Carsey-Werner Television Senior V.P. of Publicity/Public Relations and a governor of the Public Relations Peer Group, provided an insider's view on how to effectively attract celebrity talent to your cause and how to work with that talent once they are on board. Vicki Beck, Director of the Hollywood, Health & Society program at USC Annenberg's Norman Lear Center, presented a case study of one of her program's many collaborations with network and cable shows, which demonstrated the power that television has to enhance public health. Actor David Lander, best known as "Squiggy" on the sitcom *Laverne and Shirley*, shared his personal journey that led him from a career as a successful actor and baseball scout to becoming one of the nation's most visible and influential spokespeople for multiple sclerosis.

"The Television Academy is the perfect venue for discussing the positive impact that the media and celebrities can have on society," said Vickie Prothro, PIRATES Board President and KTLA Administrator of Broadcast Standards & Public Service. "Our members came away with valuable tools that will help them to more effectively deliver their messages and services." Plans are already underway to make this an annual PIRATES event at the Television Academy.

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